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SUBJECT: U.S.-RUSSIA COUNTERTERRORISM WORKING GROUP:
EMBASSY MOSCOW'S THOUGHTS ON FOLLOW-UP MEASURES

REF: A. MOSCOW 1875
[1](#)B. MOSCOW 1868
[1](#)C. MOSCOW 1647

Classified By: Ambassador John R. Beyrle. Reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

[1](#)1. (C) Summary. At the June 19-20 meeting of the U.S. - Russia Working Group on Counterterrorism (CTWG), both sides agreed to exchange a list of follow-up items (reftel A). This cable presents Post's contributions to Washington's thinking on CTWG next steps. Post and MFA officials discussed the idea of holding a "CTWG Afghanistan Subgroup Meeting" in Washington next month (reftel B). We believe this meeting would be a useful forum for making progress on issues like Russia's military assistance package and UN 1267 de-listings, and gauging Russian thinking on the implementation of counternarcotics programs. We also place a priority on pushing for positive answers from Russia on Central Asian counternarcotics cooperation and collaboration on issues related to WMD terrorism. U.S. and Russian officials will discuss CTWG next steps on MANPADS and counterterrorism intelligence cooperation at meetings in July and September respectively. Post welcomes Department's feedback on these ideas and other potential next steps. End summary.

Russia Welcomes a CTWG Afghanistan Subgroup Meeting

[1](#)2. (C) MFA Afghan Desk Chief Yuriy Khokhlov confirmed on July 11 that Russia could agree to expand the proposed agenda for a meeting on Afghanistan, and would welcome labeling it a "CTWG Afghanistan Subgroup Meeting." In our meeting with Khokhlov, we discussed the following potential agenda items:

--Military Assistance Package: Following up on Russia's July 1 proposal, Khokhlov reiterated that the Russian delegation's main priorities would be to discuss GOR's proposed \$200 million military assistance package to the Afghan National Army (ANA), potential cooperation on infrastructure, and the impact of the reconciliation process on elections. They will press for assurances that the ANA will use Russian weapons donated by Moscow or purchased through commercial transactions. Russia remains suspicious that the ANA is taking its cues from the U.S., which, Russia alleges, has advised Kabul not to use Russian weapons.

--Counternarcotics/OSCE: Initially raised by U/S Burns at

the June CTWG, we asked Khokhlov about the possibility of adding OSCE proposals on Afghanistan, in particular counternarcotics training, to the meeting agenda. Khokhlov did not object, but pressed for further details about the proposed projects. If on the agenda, Washington should be prepared to discuss the logistics of the training sessions, including location, format, participants, and duration. Khokhlov mentioned that he would seek to bring an OSCE expert from the MFA to Washington, if the U.S. would indeed be raising the recently passed OSCE Afghanistan package. We also sought to clarify reports from Vienna that Russia might contribute funding or personnel to these projects. Khokhlov was not in a position to confirm or deny, nor was he able to say with certainty that Russia would be amenable to participating in training sessions inside Afghanistan. (Comment: Department might seek further clarification from the Russian delegation at the August meeting on this alleged shift in Russian policy, noting the importance GOA places on training its law enforcement officials inside its borders, while recognizing GOA's reluctance to allow Russian law enforcement to participate. End Comment.)

--NATO-Russia Council CN Projects: The U.S. could also try to defuse Russian skepticism about the future of NATO-Russia Council (NRC) counternarcotics training sessions. Russia has repeatedly expressed its unhappiness about Afghanistan's reluctance to attend NRC training sessions at Domodedovo and Bishkek. We reminded Khokhlov that the counternarcotics programs are successful for the region as a whole and for the NATO-Russian relationship, noting that over 400 Afghan and Central Asian trainees have benefited from our joint efforts,

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and that the projects reinforce the value of NATO-Russia cooperation at a time when the relationship faces numerous challenges. Khokhlov mentioned that Russia views the NRC programs "very positively," but added, unsurprisingly, that the U.S. needed to "do more to push Afghanistan" to join the training sessions in Russia. He reiterated Russia's preference for hosting the sessions at Domodedovo. Khokhlov added that the Ministry of Interior would have problems sending Russian CN trainers to Afghanistan, because they are needed at home to train their own officials. Nonetheless, Khokhlov told us that if Washington was ready to discuss new training formats in Afghanistan, Moscow was open to doing so.

--UN 1267 Listings and De-listings: The meeting in Washington in August could also be an opportune moment for the U.S. to inform Russian officials of U.S. proposals for UN 1267 listings and de-listings. Khokhlov told us that at the August meeting, the Russian delegation might ask the U.S. for their specific ideas on de-listing procedures. Although he envisioned no strong opposition to de-listing drug lords and Afghans with close ties to the Taliban, he echoed DFM Kislyak's comments at the June CTWG that the de-listing process would be delegitimized without concrete procedures.

--Aerial Spray: Although not directly related to the CTWG, the U.S. might also want to seek clarification on Russia's reaction to ISAF's potential use of aerial spray on Afghan opium fields. Khokhlov contradicted the Russian Ambassador to Afghanistan's strong criticism of NATO's plan at the June 25 NATO-Russia Council, claiming that Russia could formulate a "positive position" if the U.S. and Allies present a clear plan on using the spray.

Waiting for a Green Light from Russia on CARICC

13. (C) DEA and law enforcement officials at Post list entry into force of the Central Asia Regional Information Control Center (CARICC) as their top priority for CTWG follow-up. We are unconvinced that bureaucratic delays, as the Russians claim, have prevented the Kremlin from signing and ratifying the agreement, as the other six participating states - the

five Central Asian countries and Azerbaijan - have already done. The U.S. could ask Russia again to finalize its approval of the program, and emphasize that its delay could damage CARICC's future. The program's pilot phase cannot continue indefinitely; funding and momentum will eventually run out. (Note: the U.S. is one of a number of international donors for this project under the aegis of UNODC. End note.)

WMD Terrorism Issues

¶4. (C) Post believes the U.S. should continue to press Russia to agree to our proposed agenda for a bioterrorism tabletop exercise, and to the sharing of risk assessment methods for bioterrorism threats. Russian MFA officials tell us that they view bioterrorism as a "virtual" rather than a real threat (reftel C). Russia appears to be equally dismissive of our sense of urgency to restart joint research on smallpox, which has been stalled in the internal GOR approval process for over a year. We should continue to emphasize to Russian officials that the possible use of smallpox in a bioterrorist attack, or a possible outbreak in the wild, requires the joint development of improved smallpox vaccines and antiviral medications.

¶5. (C) Post also recommends working towards instituting a bilateral framework for nuclear forensics. In particular, Russia continues to lack the policies and procedures to facilitate the transfer of nuclear material, as exhibited by the inability to transfer the Georgian HEU sample to Russia. Post is also following up with MFA officials to assess their reaction to the U.S.-proposed seminar on Foreign Consequence Management, which would focus on U.S.-Russian collaborative responses to a third country's request for assistance after a crisis or terrorist attack involving WMD.

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Terrorist Financing

¶6. (C) We view MFA New Threats and Challenges Director Chkhikhvishvili's suggestion to hold a meeting of the Terrorism Finance Subgroup positively. Post can assist in identifying potential dates. The U.S. and Russia could then resume discussions on Uzbekistan's suspension of its anti-money laundering and terrorist finance regime. U.S. insistence on suspending Uzbekistan's membership in the Eurasian Group (EAG) of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) will likely fall on deaf ears in Moscow, but we should remind Russia that their support for the EAG and other FATF-style regional subgroups is particularly constructive in combating terrorist and narco-financing.

¶7. (C) The U.S. might also ask Russia to pressure Kazakhstan to authorize the re-institution of the Kazakh Financial Intelligence Unit (FIU) more expeditiously. Kazakhstan's FIU, the country's main anti-terrorist financing institution, is under a moratorium until legislation is passed placing it under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Finance.

Upcoming Bilateral Meetings

¶8. (S) MANPADS experts will meet in Moscow July 28-30. In September officials from the CIA, FBI, Federal Security Service (FSB), and Foreign Intelligence Service (SVR) will hold their annual "Four Party" meeting on counterterrorism cooperation. An agenda has yet to be issued. Embassy officials stress that CT units in the U.S. intelligence community and their FSB counterparts have a productive relationship, including conducting joint operations against individuals affiliated with terrorist networks. However, the SVR told us on the margins of the CTWG that until the bodies of Russian diplomats killed in Iraq are returned, we should

not anticipate any significant intelligence cooperation.

19. (SBU) Post appreciates Department's thoughts on these ideas and other potential follow-up measures in the near-term.
BEYRLE